

Step 1

Learn More About Asthma Medicines

There are two main kinds of medicines for treating asthma. Some asthma medicines are taken every day, while some are taken only when asthma gets worse. Ask your medical provider which medicines are right for you. Ask how and when to take them.

If your medical provider gives you an inhaler, make sure you know how to use it. If you have trouble using the inhaler, ask your provider or your pharmacist for a spacer tube.



Step 2

Prepare an Asthma Action Plan with Your Medical Provider



An **Asthma Action Plan** tells you how your medical provider wants you to treat your asthma symptoms.

- **Ask** your provider to fill out an Asthma Action Plan with you.
- **Know** when to take your medicines or to give medicine to your child and what to do if asthma symptoms get worse.
- **Review** the plan with your provider often.

Step 3

Get a Flu Shot



Getting the flu can be very dangerous for people with asthma. Ask your provider about getting a flu shot every fall.

Step 4

If you Smoke, Quit Now

Smoking, or being around people who smoke, makes asthma worse. If you smoke, ask your medical provider to help you quit. Do not allow smoking in your home. Be sure no one smokes around you or your child.

Step 5

Avoid Asthma Triggers

A trigger is anything that makes asthma or breathing worse. Many people with asthma also have allergies to things like dust mites, pets, food preservatives, pollen, mold or cockroach droppings. These things can trigger asthma attacks. Here are some ways to help avoid these things.

- **Vacuum often** and wear a dust mask. Do not vacuum when asthmatic children are near.
- **Wash clothes**, sheets and blankets each week in hot water. Change pillowcases every week.
- **Wash your hair** or an asthmatic child's hair before going to bed.
- **Control cockroaches** by keeping all food out of bedrooms. Keep food and garbage in tightly closed containers.



- If you have a pet and it has to be indoors, keep your pet out of bedrooms at all times. **Bathe your pet every week** and wash your hands and any clothing that has touched your pets.

- When pollen and mold counts are high, keep your windows closed. Stay indoors in the middle of the day.
- Avoid food, including beer and dried fruits, which have **sulfites** in them.

Call the **Nurse First Asthma Program** at 1-800-???-???? anytime you are sick, hurt or have a medical question. The nurses are there 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



5 Easy Steps to Help Control Your Asthma

The Nurse First
Asthma Program from
Montana Medicaid



Department of Public Health & Human Services